

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A fender for a pontoon boat having a deck and at least one pontoon suspended below the deck and extending along at least one longitudinal side edge of the deck, the fender comprising:

a deck engaging portion including a stop face for abutting a portion of the peripheral edge of the deck;

a pontoon engaging portion including a concavely curved recess to receive and engage at least a portion of the pontoon; and

a bumper portion to at least one of deflect and cushion impacts with adjacent structures.

2. A fender as in claim 1, further comprising at least one securing member to attach said deck engaging portion to the boat.

3. A fender as in claim 2, wherein the at least one securing member comprises at least one flange extending generally perpendicular to said stop face.

4. A fender as in claim 3, wherein the at least one securing member comprises a first buffer flange portion disposed between said stop face and said pontoon engaging portion, and a second securing flange projecting from an upper edge of said stop face.

5. A fender as in claim 3, further including a hook defined adjacent a free end of said flange.

6. A fender as in claim 3, wherein said fender has a top end and a bottom end and said flange extends

adjacent said top end of the fender for engaging a top surface of the deck.

7. A fender as in claim 2, wherein the at least one securing member comprises at least one receptacle for a strap or rope for securing the fender to the pontoon boat.

8. A fender as in claim 7, wherein one said receptacle is defined adjacent a top edge of said stop face.

9. A fender as in claim 7, wherein there are a plurality of said receptacles including receptacles defined adjacent side edges of said stop face.

10. A fender as in claim 1, wherein said fender includes a buffer portion for being disposed between and bridging said pontoon and a bottom of said deck.

11. A fender as in claim 1, further comprising a gas chamber defined within said bumper portion.

12. A fender as in claim 1, wherein said bumper portion and said deck engaging portion are separately formed.

13. A fender as in claim 1, wherein said deck engaging, pontoon engaging, and bumper portions are formed by molding.

14. A method for shielding and protecting a longitudinal side edge of a pontoon boat comprising:

providing a pontoon boat including a deck having a peripheral edge, at least first and second pontoons mounted below said deck, said pontoons respectively extending along each longitudinal side edge of said deck;

providing a fender having a stop face for abutting a portion of the peripheral side edge of said deck, a concavely curved recess for engaging at least a portion of a surface of a said pontoon, and a bumper portion to at least one of deflect and cushion impacts with adjacent structures; and

disposing said fender so that said concavely curved recess engages at least a portion of a surface of a said pontoon, and so that said deck engaging portion is disposed adjacent said peripheral edge of said deck.

15. A method as in claim 14, further comprising securing said fender to said pontoon boat.

16. A method as in claim 15, wherein said securing comprises providing a fender including at least one flange extending generally perpendicular to said stop face and a hook defined adjacent a free end of said flange, and said securing comprises hooking said fender to said deck with said hook.

17. A method as in claim 16, wherein a rub rail is secured to the peripheral edge of said deck and said hooking comprises hooking said hook behind said rub rail.

18. A method as in claim 14, wherein said fender further comprises at least one receptacle for a strap or rope and said securing comprises securing the fender to the pontoon boat with at least one rope or strap.